CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The First Occupation of Western Ukraine

After the expulsion of the Soviet Forces from Western Ukraine in 1920, the territory, including Eastern Galicia and Lviv, had remained under Polish rule and had been subjected to a policy of Polonization and colonization by a Polish population. There had been during the period between the wars many clashes and much unpleasantness between the two nationalities and the ill will thus generated promised disastrous consequences for Poland in case of a new war. At the same time the Polish domination had never threatened the fundamental forms of Ukrainian social life, as had been the case in the UkSSR; the Ukrainians had a certain representation in the Polish Parliament, and they had been allowed, despite hindrances, to develop their own economic life. With the possible exception of the one district of Boryslav, there was very little Communism among the population, who were well aware of the handicaps under which their brothers in the UkSSR were living. At the same time the Nazi refusal to support the Republic of Carpatho-Ukraine in the spring of 1939 had placed them on their guard against the Nazis.

Thus, when World War II broke out on September 1, 1939, the revolt of the Ukrainians which many Poles expected did not take place. However, the Polish government in the first days arrested and placed in concentration camps many of the Ukrainian leaders but they were freed by the rapid advance of the German forces and the Polish retreat, which forced into Lviv and the neighborhood many thousands of refugees.

On August 23, 1939, when the Nazis and the Soviets signed a non-aggression treaty, it was provided that if Poland were disintegrated, Germany and the USSR would divide the territory